

DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



BRIAN SCHWEITZER  
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STATE OF MONTANA

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June 1, 2006

Joyce Dougan  
LBSI Board Chair  
PO Box 1311  
Plains, MT 59859

Dear Joyce:

Please find attached the annual Quality Assurance Review for Little Bitterroot Services. It continues to be a pleasure to work with LBSI staff in ensuring a high quality of services. The review went well, no surprises.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about this report. I look forward to another year assigned as LBSI's Quality Improvement Specialist!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paula M. Tripp".

Paula M. Tripp, MEd/QMRP  
Quality Improvement Specialist  
Developmental Disabilities Program

cc: Ted Spas, Regional Manager DDP (Missoula)  
John Zeeck, Quality Assurance Specialist DDP (Helena)  
Tim Plaska, Community Services Bureau Chief DDP (Helena)  
Vickie Poynter, CEO Flathead Industries  
Carol Dossett, Program Director LBSI

## **Scope of Review**

### **General Areas**

Little Bitterroot Services, Inc. (LBSI) provides residential and day/vocational services to adults with disabilities in Sanders County. They operate one group home, two Thrift Stores, and a day habilitation/vocational center. They also own two four-plex apartments when individuals who receive Supported Living Services reside. Finally, they recently purchased a mobile home for two individuals that receive Supported Living services.

This year, LBSI has expanded their services to accept three individuals from Montana Developmental Center. These moves afforded two residents from the group home the opportunity to 'graduate' to Supported Living services. (See Quality Assurance Observation Sheet –QAOS- #1). LBSI continues to demonstrate a commitment to meeting individuals needs, this year one resident from the group home experienced medical problems ultimately necessitating dialysis. LBSI held her service open for 9 months in an attempt to allow her to stabilize medically to be able to "port" her service funding to a community where dialysis services were available. This clearly was 'above and beyond' the responsibility of a provider agency.

The agency has maintained carf accreditation. They received a three-year accreditation which is valid until January 2009. Accreditation is no longer required by the Developmental Disabilities Program (DDP), LBSI's commitment to maintaining national accreditation standards is commendable.

LBSI implemented Incident Management activities prior to the April 2005 publication of the Incident Management Policy. They began completing monthly trend reviews and investigations prior to the July 2005 full statewide implementation of the Policy. This year, LBSI began working with a web-based incident reporting format. The program allows instant access to incident data for LBSI staff, case management and the regional DDP staff. (See Quality Assurance Observation Sheet – QAOS #2)

There are no concerns or issues noted with LBSI's invoicing or fiscal management. An A-133 audit was completed with no concerns noted. The group home is licensed annually. There were no concerns noted during the licensing visit.

## **Specific Services Reviewed**

### **Residential**

The expansion of services to serve individuals moving to the community from Montana Developmental Center is commendable. The individuals who moved have more intensive needs than the current LBSI consumers. They present a new realm of challenges for the staff.

LBSI serves eighteen individuals in residential services. There are 8 residents at the group home and ten individuals receiving supported living services. There were five individuals chosen for the sample, all receive Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver Services.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Little Bitterroot provides transportation services to the consumers. With the individuals receiving community supports, they transport individuals to Plains from as far away as Noxon, MT. Staff receive training for transportation and maintenance checks are monitored and completed on an ongoing basis.

Individuals who have not reached their highest potential for self-medication administration all work on training programs through their individual plans. LBSI does an excellent job assisting with medications, and their average for medication errors is 1-2 errors per quarter. When individuals in Supported Living have medication errors, LBSI trainers are quick to re-implement training programs.

LBSI continues to maintain an excellent functional Safety Committee. There were no physical plant safety concerns noted with this review. Fire Drills and fire suppression equipment is all current. LBSI completes Disaster Drills much more frequently than required.

During this review, one consumer who recently moved to Supported Living (from Group Home services) was noted to exhibit poor safety skills. While I was trying to visit the apartment this consumer did not answer the doorbell or knocks on his apartment door. Staff indicated that he also fails to answer the telephone when it rings. This is of great concern, particularly since staff were aware of his inability/unwillingness to demonstrate basic safety skills. Please see QAOS #3.

### **SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY**

LBSI does a superb job with Individual Planning and implementation. IPs are based on assessments, implemented and revised on time and as appropriate, and Quarterly Status Reports are completed. There were no concerns with IPs noted in this review.

LBSI staff work hard to ensure the consumers have access to leisure and recreational pursuits that are interesting and fun. The size of the Plains community assists in ensuring that consumers are integrated into the community. There are some consumers at the Group Home who require additional supports in this area, please see QAOS #5 for more specifics. These individuals have been noted in the past to need more training and support to participate in their community.

Most consumers have access to all needed medical services in Plains. Some specialist visits are needed in Missoula and Kalispell. The staff all receive First Aid and CPR training and do an excellent job of identifying and intervening for signs and symptoms of injury/illness.

Consumer Satisfaction Surveys are addressed at Annual IP meetings. There are no concerns expressed by the consumers. The individuals who receive services at LBSI all express a high degree of satisfaction with their services.

## **STAFFING**

Due to expansion in individuals served, there have been new staff hired this year. All necessary background checks were completed. There were no concerns. LBSI has an excellent Orientation Training curricula and process. Of the three new hires reviewed, one person's sign-off sheet was not able to be found. This appeared to be an oversight by a supervisor leaving the sheet in an area where one of the consumers was able to get ahold of it and it was destroyed. The sign-offs were recent enough to make an acceptable re-creation however, documentation is a necessary part of training! Please see QAOS #4.

This year there have been no issues noted with staff ratios, LBSI administrators fill-in often to ensure ratios are met. There were 5 staff surveyed with the staff questionnaire, all staff answered all topic areas without exception!

## **INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**

As noted previously, LBSI implemented the Incident Management Policy prior to the required date. The weekly Incident Management Committee meetings are well attended and excellent recommendations have come from that group. There have been 5 critical incident investigations this year. The investigations have

revealed excellent ideas for proactive approaches to be implemented to avoid further incidents of a similar nature. Please see QAOS #6.

LBSI staff remain in contact with Adult Protective Services when necessary. The APS staff works closely with the Case Manager and agency to ensure that individuals needs are met and that there are no concerns with abuse, neglect or exploitation.

### **Work/Day/Community Employment**

Little Bitterroot serves twenty-two individuals in day/vocational services. There are some individuals who work part-time in LBSI facilities and part-time in community job placements. LBSI operates two thrift stores, a silk-screen business, and has some work crews who complete janitorial, 3 Dog Down, and nursery (planting) contracts. They also operate a book selling business over the internet through Ebay and Amazon.com. There were five individuals selected for the sample, all receive Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver services.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Refer to Health and Safety area under Residential Services.

### **SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY**

Refer to Service Planning and Delivery area under Residential Services.

### **STAFFING**

Refer to Staffing area under Residential Services.

### **INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**

Refer to Incident Management area under Residential Services.

## **C. Community Supports**

Little Bitterroot serves six individuals thorough community supports. The service agreements range from day/habilitation, residential habilitation, recreation, health & health maintenance, transportation and fiscal intermediary. There were five individuals selected for the sample, all receive Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver services. Please refer to the Residential and Day/Vocational sections of this report for specifics.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Refer to Health and Safety area under Residential Services.

## **SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY**

Refer to Service Planning and Delivery area under Residential Services.

## **STAFFING**

Refer to Staffing area under Residential Services.

## **INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**

Refer to Incident Management area under Residential Services.

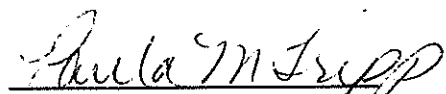
### **C. Transportation**

Refer to Health and Safety area under Residential Services.

### **C. Case Management**

Little Bitterroot Services does not provide case management services.

**Respectfully submitted:**



**Paula M. Tripp, MSED/QMRP  
Quality Improvement Specialist  
Developmental Disabilities Program**

**Cc: Joyce Dougan, LBSI Board Chairperson  
Vickie Poynter, CEO  
Carol Dossett, Programs Director LBSI  
Shannon Benson, Programs Director LBSI  
John Zeeck, Quality Assurance Specialist DDP (Helena)  
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